



## E. A Home to Culture, Community and History

*Planning Principles: Poplar Point should be a host to history and culture – creating new, easily accessible sites for commemorative gardens, memorials and museums and linking the park to a vital, growing, residential and commercial neighborhood of Historic Anacostia.*

### Museums and Cultural Facilities

Historic Anacostia has a rich heritage and Poplar Point can be an ideal location to showcase community history. There have been a number of proposals for community destinations such as a local theater, community center, and an environmental education center. Ideas such as a historic walking tour with site markers, programmatic and physical linkages to neighborhood cultural destinations such as the Anacostia Museum and the Frederick Douglass House will be encouraged.

Poplar Point has been designated as an appropriate location for a major cultural facility that would draw visitors from all over the District and the region. While there has been interest and inquiries by major museum groups, no specific program has been finalized. However, the plan identifies a number of sites that might be appropriate for such a use, depending upon scale and program. Some key sites include the Point with a building on axis with L’Enfant’s New Jersey and Capitol Building axis and sites along Anacostia Drive such as the parcel in front of the WMATA parking structure. Smaller cultural facilities may be located at the terminus of Good Hope Road and W Street or at the south end of Anacostia Drive.

### Memorial Sites and Gardens

The plan for Poplar Point identifies a few key sites for the location of memorials and markers. These sites include the Point, the intersection of Anacostia Drive and the New Jersey Axis, and significant locations along the shoreline. While no single memorial design has been finalized, a number of ideas are in planning

stages. Key among them is a proposal by the Anacostia Garden Club for a Frederick Douglass Memorial Garden. A possible location for this use may be at the terminus of W Street, which would serve as a link between the Gardens and the Frederick Douglass House in Historic Anacostia.

Opportunities for historic interpretation of the site’s heritage will be encouraged. One potential idea is the development of an African American Interpretive Art Park that would bring together a number of cultural and historic themes in its design.

Community gardens may also be accommodated within the Park. While it appears that the existing greenhouses may not be suitable for reuse, opportunities to locate similar structures in the Park either in a garden setting or as special destinations may be considered.

### Outdoor Amphitheater and Gathering Areas

The appeal of Poplar Point as a gathering place for celebratory events was most clearly demonstrated on Malcolm X Day when over 80,000 people congregated at the site. Occasional citywide celebrations such as these will be accommodated in the Park in facilities such as open lawns, plazas, and an outdoor amphitheater and stage with the river as backdrop. For the amphitheater, sensitive design that follows the natural contours of the land and uses natural materials and ground cover will be encouraged.



Figure 45: Example of a sculptural memorial: Iwo Jima Memorial



Figure 46: Example of an amphitheater built into the landscape: Berkeley Rose Garden